

ROBERT CHARLES MAY was born at Ampthill, in Bedfordshire, on April 5, 1829. His father, Mr. Charles May, F.R.S., was a partner in the firm of Ransomes & May, of Ipswich, and it was in the works of that well-known engineering firm that Mr. Robert May served his apprenticeship; after which time he held the post of out-door manager, a position that gave him great experience as a mechanical engineer in the erection of steam mill-machinery, as well as in that of fixed plant on railways, such as iron aqueducts, roofs, bridges, &c. Afterwards he had charge of the works other than rolling stock on the South Eastern Railway. Leaving this position in 1852, he was associated with the late Mr. J. M. Rendel, F.R.S., in some of the hydraulic works of that eminent engineer. He constructed, in 1853, the outfall of the Walland and Denge marshes at Jury's Gut, or Jew's Gap, in Kent, and placed there a reservoir or tidal pen, at the sea end of which were draw-gates, and at the land end self-acting tidal doors. The tidal water was thus penned in, and formed a sufficient scour to keep the outfall clear of the shingle and sand which travel from west to east with the tide on that coast. In 1854, about three years after his father had left Ipswich and settled in London as a consulting engineer, he followed his father's example, and soon acquired a very considerable practice in gas, mill, and railway engineering, and was largely employed as superintendent engineer in the construction of fixed and moving railway plant for home and foreign railways.

As an arbitrator in engineering disputes he had a very large experience, and was almost without a rival, for he put his whole heart into whatever he undertook, and brought sound mechanical knowledge of a high order, with an exceptionally clear and analytical judgment, to bear upon the questions with which he had to deal. His high integrity and fairness commanded the esteem of both sides, and gave considerable weight to his decisions. He had also a very large experience in valuation work.

In his later years he devoted some attention to mining work, and in the last two or three years of his life he held the appointment of consulting engineer to the Gallizzi Sulphur Mines in Sicily, and he was lately appointed to a similar position in the Giona mines in the same island. These appointments necessitated his travelling to the Mediterranean twice a year, and it was on his return from Sicily, and immediately on his arrival at his hotel at Marseilles, that he was seized with the illness (aneurism of the heart) which in a few minutes terminated his life, on July 20, 1882.

He was a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and an old Member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. He was also one of the Assessors of the Board of Trade. He was elected a Fellow of the Society on May 10, 1861.

EDWARD HAMILTON PRINGLE, the fifth son of the late Mark Pringle, formerly of Oakendean, Karsham, and J.P. and D.L. for

Sussex, was born January 1, 1844, at Oakendean. He was educated chiefly at the Edinburgh Academy and Edinburgh Military Academy. In 1864 he went out to Queensland, and was engaged in sheep-farming in that colony for two years. He then proceeded to India, where Lord Napier of Ettrick, at that time Governor of Madras, conferred on him the appointment of Assistant Engineer in the Public Works department. After holding successively the posts of Special Executive Engineer of Wainád, District Engineer of South Kanara, and Divisional Officer of the West Coast, he was gazetted to Gaujám; and at Berhampúr, in that district, he was seized with cholera on May 30, 1882, and expired after a few hours' illness.

He was devoted to scientific pursuits from his boyhood, and, in addition to his astronomical attainments, was an acute and careful naturalist. He applied himself chiefly to spectral astronomy, but was unfortunate in being long stationed on the hills of Malabar, which for months together are enveloped in clouds and mist, and are otherwise unsuited for observations save at rare intervals. His health was moreover much shattered by fever contracted in the jungles of Wainád, and of late years the pressure of official duties allowed him scant time for the pursuit of his favourite science.

Mr. Pringle was a not unfrequent contributor to the pages of *Nature* on astronomical and zoological questions, and in 1877 published a small pamphlet on the subject of forests in relation to famines, a matter which has since then engaged much attention in India.

He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society on April 10, 1874; he was also a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a Member of the Society of Telegraph Engineers.

THOMAS ROMNEY ROBINSON, D.D., F.R.S., was born in Dublin on April 23, 1792. His abilities and genius seem to have been manifested at a very early age, and his first appearance as an author dates so far back as 1806. On that occasion his venture was entitled "Juvenile Poems by Thomas Romney Robinson, to which is prefixed a short account of the Author by a Member of the Belfast Literary Society": Belfast, 1806. The book contains a number of poems written by the author at various ages below thirteen. Dr. Robinson's last publication is in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1880, and it must be regarded as a curious circumstance in literary history that an interval of three-quarters of a century should have elapsed between Dr. Robinson's first appearance as an author and his last.

In the year 1814 Dr. Robinson was elected a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and he was for several years engaged in lecturing in the University as Deputy Professor of Natural Philosophy. In connection with his labours as a teacher he